



Kim Grose '82

Executive director,  
San Francisco Organizing Project

Among the attributes sought when Rhodes Scholars are selected are: “truth, courage, devotion to duty, sympathy for and protection of the weak, kindness, unselfishness and fellowship” and “moral force of character and instincts to lead, and to take an interest in one’s fellow beings.” One of two recent Rhodes Scholars who graduated from MCS, Kim Grose says, “When I am asked about my life, the place that I start is the alternative elementary school that shaped who I am and what I’m doing in the world. It was a blessing and a privilege to attend MCS.”

Kim realized at a young age that she wanted her life to be about “justice and creating the beloved community.” While attending Stanford University, she worked in the Public Service Center and organized students to do volunteer projects in the Palo Alto community. Her time at Oxford, where she earned a Masters in Philosophy in Cultural Anthropology, afforded her the opportunity to study how societies change and why people do things so differently in diverse cultures. Though offered the opportunity to pursue a doctorate degree, she turned it down: “My community passions were in the United States—I was interested in public education and whether schools can be a vehicle for social justice.”

In 1993, Kim co-founded and directed Partners in School Innovation, a highly effective education reform program with the primary mission of eliminating the

achievement gap in public education. Seeking new possibilities for change, she then decided to join the San Francisco Organizing Project, a faith-based coalition that works to influence policy in health care, housing and education. Kim participated in creating Healthy Kids in 2002, an initiative that provides health care to children regardless of their immigration status, making San Francisco the first city in the United States to have universal – 99.2% – health care coverage for children. She also organized around the “Yes, In My Back Yard” campaign and Proposition B, both aiming to increase affordable housing in San Francisco and throughout California. Kim became the executive director of the San Francisco Organizing Project three years ago.

Kim observes, “What MCS gave me made me different from some of my classmates in college. MCS nurtured a deep sense of curiosity about my own self and my community. It gave me intellectual curiosity about the world and the confidence to initiate things and influence institutions and people around me for community good.”

*MCS is founded on the idea that every person has the potential for great good, and in order to learn about those around us, we must start by understanding the closest people to us: our classmates.*

Justy Kosek '06, on MLK Walk